

ST. ANTHONY FALLS HERITAGE BOARD

704 SOUTH SECOND STREET ♦ MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA ♦ 55401

July 28, 2003

Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy
Chair Transportation and Public Works Committee
Minneapolis City Council
Room 307 City Hall
350 5th Street South
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Chair Colvin Roy and Committee Members,

The Minneapolis riverfront is a dynamic presence in the life of the city. Residents and tourists alike are specifically seeking out this unique environment and enjoying the Mississippi River, the Stone Arch Bridge, parks, trails and attractions. It is apparent, however, that public awareness and access to this significant resource is hindered by the lack of directional signage. As Minneapolis prepares to invite the public to its largest riverfront celebration ever—the Grand Excursion in July 2004—directional and destination signage for the central riverfront becomes an essential consideration.

In February 2002, the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board (membership list enclosed) approved and funded a project to develop a master plan for signage to and within the Minneapolis Riverfront District. Since that time a core group representing governmental agencies and private organizations involved with the riverfront area, have been meeting with the project's consultant, Larsen Design, to develop a draft master plan for riverfront signage.

This past June the draft plan was presented at a meeting of the Heritage Board where it was met with enthusiastic support. Enclosed is a copy of Larsen Design's presentation, which outlines the project's goals, strategies, practical considerations and design recommendations. During the next few months the draft plan will be presented to business and residential groups located in and near the riverfront. The comments gathered during these presentations and from meetings with other community leaders will shape the finalization of the plan by November. Preliminary cost estimates to implement the fabrication and installation of the signage outlined in the plan are presently being secured.

This month I met to discuss the project with several community groups that had members of the press in attendance. Their interest could translate into stories about the riverfront signage project and its significance to the city.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and further address the objectives of the plan and answer questions you may have. I can be reached at my Mill City Museum office, 612-341-7648 or through email Deborah.Johnson@mnhs.org.

Sincerely,

Deborah J. Johnson
Coordinator, St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board

cc: Larry Blackstad, Hennepin County
Pierre Willette, Department of Public Works
Ann Calvert, Minneapolis Community Development Agency
Rachel Ramadhyani, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Greg Mathis, Planning Department/Heritage Preservation Commission
Dennis Morris, Public Works
Steve Poore, Zoning Office
Michael Rainville, Greater Minneapolis Convention and Visitors Association

The Saint Anthony Falls Heritage Board

The Minnesota State Legislature established the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board in 1988. The Statute charges the Board with the preservation and interpretation the historical and natural features within the Minneapolis central riverfront. This area (stretching from the Plymouth Avenue Bridge to I-35, and from University to Washington Avenues) is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and contains two National Landmarks—the Washburn Crosby and Pillsbury “A” Mills.

The Heritage Board has twenty-two members representing both the public and private sectors (current membership list follows). In accordance with the Statute, annual contributions to fund the work of the Board are received from the City of Minneapolis/Minneapolis Community Development Agency, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Hennepin County, and the Minnesota Historical Society. Additional funding for major projects has been secured from federal, state and local resources.

The work of the Board is guided by a master plan adopted in 1990. The Board’s achievements include: the preservation of the landmark Stone Arch Bridge and its conversion from an abandoned railway to a place of public access and enjoyment; the creation of the 1.8 mile St. Anthony Falls Heritage Trail circling the central riverfront; archaeological investigation of historic sites; educational programs; and the provision of major funding for Mill Ruins Park.

St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board Membership 2003

(Chair) Director of the Minnesota Historical Society	Nina Archabal
Mayor of the City of Minneapolis	R. T. Rybak
Chair of the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners	Mike Opat
President of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Bob Fine
Superintendent of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Mary Merrill Anderson
Minnesota House of Representatives	Keith Ellison Arlon Lindner
Minnesota State Senate	Linda Higgins Lawrence Pogemiller
Minneapolis City Council (two)	Barbara Johnson Don Samuels
Hennepin County Board of Commissioners (two)	Peter McLaughlin

	Mark Stenglein
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Commissioners (two)	Walt Dziedzic Marie Hauser
Minnesota State Review Board	Steven Edwins
Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission	Phillip Koski
Hennepin County History Museum (Hennepin History Museum)	Donna Stephenson
Minnesota Historical Society	Ian Stewart
One advisor appointed by the Park Board	Don Nikkola
Two advisors appointed by the Chair of the Board	Sage Cowles John Sarna